



# ST MARTIN'S BARNEHURST

## PARISH NEWSLETTER

### SEPTEMBER 2025

Eucharist services each week at 10.30am followed by refreshments

The next non eucharist Family Service will be on **21<sup>st</sup> September**

All services are followed with refreshments

Click [here](#) for the full calendar of Family Services in 2025

**We welcome back Father Gareth as he returns from his sabbatical**

#### A Word of Thanks for the Gift of Sabbatical [click here to read this article in full](#)

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for the extraordinary gift of a sabbatical. A sabbatical is far more than a holiday or a pause from duties; it is an invitation for rest, renewal, and rediscovery. A chance to listen afresh to God, to my own heart, and to the needs of the community to which I am called. For all of this, and for the trust that has been extended to me, I say thank you. Ministry, like any vocation, requires energy, imagination, and resilience. These cannot be endlessly poured out without being replenished. You have given me time to breathe more deeply, to read more widely, and to pray with greater stillness. You have shown me that you care not only about the tasks I perform, but also about the person I am. Thank you for the kindness and generosity that lies behind this decision. It requires rearrangement of duties, the willingness of others to step forward, and the patience to accept that routines will shift. I am deeply conscious that my colleagues and co-leaders have taken on additional responsibilities so that I might step away for a season. Their willingness to do so is a gift of love and solidarity. I am grateful to each person who has said "yes" to filling the gaps, carrying the extra load, or offering encouragement along the way. During this sabbatical I have had space to explore interests and questions that are difficult to address in the busyness of daily life. I've spent some time with the brothers at the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield, stayed at the Anglican Centre in Rome and at Cuddesdon, an Anglican College in Oxford. I have been able to read slowly, not just for sermon preparation and to spend some time in prayer and reflection without glancing at the clock. I have been able to attend retreats, explore new places, and encounter God in unexpected ways. These are treasures that will not only bless me but, I hope, will overflow into the ministry I share with you. Thank you for giving me the freedom to pursue them. I've travelled to Vigo, Barcelona, Valencia, Toulon, Florence, Rome, Algéro. By stepping aside for this time, I have been reminded that rest is not an indulgence but an essential rhythm of life. The sabbatical has given me permission to stop, to let go, to trust that the world continues to turn even when I am not busy. Thank you, too, for recognising the need for imagination. A sabbatical is not simply about recovery; it is about possibility. It has given me room to ask questions such as: What might the next chapter of ministry look like? Where is God calling us as a community? How can I grow in wisdom, compassion, and skill so that I may serve more faithfully? These are not questions that can be answered in haste. They require time, quiet, and openness. Your gift of sabbatical has provided exactly that environment. I also wish to thank you for the support that you have given during this time, reminding me that the sabbatical is not a solitary venture but a shared journey. I may have stepped aside from daily duties, but I have not stepped away from community. As I return from this time away, I do so with a renewed sense of gratitude and a refreshed sense of calling. The sabbatical has not distanced me from ministry; rather, it has deepened my love for it. It has reminded me why I was drawn to this path in the first place. It has rekindled joy, sharpened focus, and restored hope. These are gifts I bring back with me, and I offer them freely in service to the community.

Father Gareth

#### GOSPELS FOR SEPTEMBER

7 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Luke 14. 25-33
14 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Luke 15. 1-10
21 <sup>st</sup> September 2025	Luke 16. 1-13
28 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Luke 16. 19- end

#### COLLECT FOR SEPTEMBER

Almighty God, you search us and know us. May we rely on you in strength and rest on you in weakness, now and in all our days. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Vicar: Father Gareth Bowen - Rest day: Monday  
Vicarage: 93 Pelham Road, Barnehurst DA7 4LY  
[st.martins.barnehurst@gmail.com](mailto:st.martins.barnehurst@gmail.com)

[fathergareth@me.com](mailto:fathergareth@me.com) 01322 523344 / 07775 674504  
St.Martin's Church: Erith Road, Barnehurst DA7 6LE  
[www.aChurchNearYou.com/saint-martins-barnehurst](http://www.aChurchNearYou.com/saint-martins-barnehurst)

Contact [st.martins.mag@gmail.com](mailto:st.martins.mag@gmail.com) to add or remove someone from the mailing list or if you have anything that you would like included in the next issue



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In September we ask you to pray for everyone living or working in Bullman Close, Chieveley Road, Erith Road, Dorothy Evans Close, Martens Avenue, Pinnacle Hill, Pinnacle Hill North, Spring Vale and Springfield Road

We also ask you to remember the following people in your prayers and keep them in your thoughts: Andrew, Angela, David, Elizabeth, Joan, John, Joyce, Keith, Mary, Neil, Rob, and all who are suffering in body, mind and spirit.

If you have any specific prayer requests or an approaching significant special event, please let us know when so that we can add it to our prayer list at the appropriate time.

#### SAMARITANS & ST MARTIN'S PLAYERS

##### QUIZ NIGHT

**SATURDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

An evening to raise funds for our local Samaritans Group

Open to All, Doors open at 6.30pm for prompt 7pm start

£5 per head, max 8 persons per team;

Pay at door on arrival, cash only please

There will be a raffle, £1 per strip.

Please bring own drinks and nibbles, tea and coffee will be available.

This event replaces St Martin's Players Autumn production, which due to licensing problems had to be postponed.

#### THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX OPENING

September is the month we collect money for The Children's Society. This is the Church of England's charity which helps children and young people in need of support, who are homeless, living in poverty, suffering from domestic abuse or have other major problems.

If you have a collection box at home, please bring it to church on any Sunday and give it to Heather, or pass it to someone who can lock it in the safe if she is not there. If you would like to support the charity, any cash or cheques made payable to the society would be very welcome too.

Our Coffee Shop reopens on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Come and join us between 10am and 12 noon in the Maxim Room



**SAVE THE DATE FOR ST MARTIN'S  
CHRISTMAS FAIR  
SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025**

#### CAMEO (MU)

Our next CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other) meeting is on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm in the Maxim Room as usual. After Tea & Coffee and a few notices, Alyson will be presenting her illustrated talk about The Hebrides. All adults are welcome; entrance is £1.

**BOOK FAIR**  
**BACON BAPS**  
**BROWNIES**  
**JIGSAWS**  
**& MORE**

**6 SEPTEMBER 2025**  
**8:30 - 12:30**

*Pre-loved books, bacon baps & brownies plus more*

**St Martins Church, Erith Road,  
Bexleyheath, DA7 6LE**

Raising funds for St Martin's Church & community groups



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**SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER**  
**3.30PM TO 6PM**

THE 89 AND 229 BUSES STOP RIGHT BY THE CHURCH (LONG LANE STOP) AND A SHORT DISTANCE (0.4 MILES - 9 MINUTES WALK) FROM BARNEHURST RAILWAY STATION

**FREE ENTRY**  
INCLUDES 1X BUG ITEM PER PERSON

**JOIN US FOR OUR CELEBRATING LONDON IN BARNEHURST FUN DAY**

**ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH**  
ERITH ROAD,  
BARNEHURST, DA7 6LE

**FREE FUN FOR EVERYONE**  
BOUNCY CASTLE • GIANT GAMES  
DRINKS • BBQ • CRAFTS

**ALSO AVAILABLE:**  
CHARITY STALLS • BAR • AND MORE

**BRING THE FAMILY FOR A FREE\* AFTERNOON OUT**  
\*SOME CHARGES APPLY

#### ST MARTIN'S CHURCH MONTHLY DRAW

£1 Per ticket

Email: [smartins.monthlydraw@gmail.com](mailto:smartins.monthlydraw@gmail.com)

Drawn on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2025

1st	£25	no. 128	Julia Jamieson
2nd	£10	no. 139	Dave Barnett
3rd	£5	no. 212	Deborah Ingram
4th	£5	no. 5	Jean Baldwin

#### IN BRIEF

**POSTAGE STAMPS AND PRINTER INK CARTRIDGES -**  
Please keep saving these. Collecting boxes are in the church and hall

**GARDENING WORKING PARTIES -** If you can help to keep our grounds tidy please contact Phil:  
[Philip.church@virgin.net](mailto:Philip.church@virgin.net)

#### UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX MASS

St Martin's welcomes Bexley's Ukrainian residents as they hold mass each Sunday from 1pm to 3pm. The mass is in Ukrainian and is led by an Orthodox Priest or Presbyter

#### The Big Knit

*Knitting for charity*

Saturday 11th October 2025  
Rochester Cathedral, Kent  
10am - 1pm



Local registered charity Making Miracles is pleased to announce this year's annual Big Knit at Rochester [Cathedral](#) and we would like to invite as many people as able to attend the event on Saturday 11 October from 10am to 1pm.

As a local charity we provide baby loss support and services to all families across Kent and Medway who lose a baby and monies we make from selling items knitted fund our really important services like professional bereavement and trauma counselling so that at such a tragic time in their lives those families are getting the help

they need without having to worry about costs as all our services are free.

We encourage as many people as possible between now and then to make squares which they can make up into blankets themselves or let us have on the day for other knitters to sew into squares for us. The morning is lots of fun with us always trying to make more squares than the previous years. Squares should be 6x6 inches each and we ask people to bring any they have been able to make before as well if they would like to and bring in a bag so that we can put those knitted by one person into the same blanket. The most popular colours are pastel pinks, blues, greys and white but we are happy to take all squares made.

The finished blankets are then sold on our community stalls and in our shops "Handmade with Love" with every penny raised funding our bereavement services for families who lose a baby.

Making Miracles is also really proud of what local volunteers make for us so at this year's event we will also be showcasing lots of items that have been made and kindly donated to us to sell to raise much needed funds. Included in this showcase event will be wooden items made and donated to us by the prisoners in Maidstone Prison, with whom we have a unique partnership.

It would be lovely for people to also visit us on the day and learn more about what we do.

#### ERITH DEANERY YOUTH TRUST FAMILY FUN DAY

**ST MARTIN'S CHURCH**  
**20th September 2025 2pm - 5pm.**

#### NOAH'S ARK ANIMAL THEME

An opportunity for families across the Deanery to relax with food, craft activities and games

**BOUNCY CASTLE**  
**FOOTBALL GOAL, SOFT PLAY**  
**SOFT ARCHERY, TOMAHAWKS**

**If you would like to volunteer to help on the day please email the mag address from the contact details in this newsletter**